



I-695 Baltimore Beltway Projects

Scoop on the Loops



NEWS RELEASE

Office of Communications

Phone: 410-545-0303 / 800-323-6742

MD Relay: 1-800-735-2258

For Immediate Release

Contacts: David Buck, 410-545-0303/Fran Ward, District Four 410-321-2812

TRAFFIC ALERT (REVISED)

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION BEGINS I-695/CHARLES STREET INTERCHANGE PROJECT IN TOWSON

Construction Traffic Shift Scheduled for Tonight Postponed Due to Weather; New Traffic Pattern on Charles Street to be in Place Wednesday Morning

(**March 16, 2009**) – Due to forecasted wet weather conditions, the Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration (SHA) has postponed the construction traffic shift along the MD 139 (Charles Street) bridge over I-695 (Baltimore Beltway) originally scheduled for 7 p.m. tonight.

The traffic shift is now scheduled to begin 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 17, with a new traffic pattern scheduled to be in effect by 6 a.m. Wednesday, March 18. The new travel pattern will enhance safety for crews and motorists as the project team demolishes and replaces one-half of the bridge during the next year.

Description of Traffic Shift and Detours

Between 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 17 and 6 a.m. Wednesday, March 18, SHA and its contractor, the Six-M Company of Delta, Pa. will institute a long-term change in traffic patterns at the Charles Street interchange. Both northbound and southbound lanes of Charles Street will be shifted to the east side of the existing bridge. (In case of additional inclement weather, the overnight traffic shifts will be done the next possible weeknight.) Motorists are strongly encouraged to avoid using the Charles Street interchange on Tuesday night, and to use alternate routes such as York Road (MD 45).

Beginning at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, motorists will encounter single lane closures on Charles Street to facilitate the traffic shift. Additionally, there will be an **overnight closure of the ramp from eastbound I-695 to northbound Charles Street** between 8 p.m. Tuesday night and 5 a.m. Wednesday morning. Motorists will be directed to eastbound I-695 past the interchange to Exit 25, MD 45 - York Road north, to westbound I-695 back to Exit 24, Charles Street until 5 a.m. Weather permitting, the new traffic patterns will in effect on the Charles Street Bridge by 6 a.m. Wednesday.

(More)

Page Two

The new traffic pattern will reduce the number of through lanes on the bridge. Southbound Charles Street will be reduced to one through lane on the bridge, with two through lanes south of the bridge.

Northbound Charles Street will be reduced to two through lanes on the bridge. Additionally, motorists in the right lane of northbound Charles Street will be forced to turn right either at Kenilworth Drive or the ramp to eastbound I-695. Motorists wishing to travel from northbound Charles Street to the westbound I-695 will continue to be able to use the right ramp or access the left ramp via the roundabout at Bellona Avenue.

This interchange currently carries more than 220,000 vehicles per day along I-695, with 55,000 vehicles per day along Charles Street. The Charles Street Bridge will remain open to traffic during construction; however, the number of travel lanes on the bridge will be reduced to enhance safety for travelers and construction crews. The speed limit on I-695 is reduced to 50 mph in the work zone. SHA reminds all drivers to buckle up, obey posted speed limits, “think orange,” and stay alert in the work zone. Motorists can learn more about Maryland’s highway safety program by logging onto www.choosesafetyforlife.com.

Citizens who have questions about traffic operations along I-695 and Charles Street may call the project field office at 410-296-9041 or SHA’s District 4 Office at 410-321-2800 or toll free at 1-800-962-3077. Citizens may view the I-695/Charles Street project web page on SHA’s website, www.marylandroads.com. Click “Current Construction Projects” on the home page menu to reach the SHA Projects Page.

###